How to Preserve a Candy Portrait

Written By: Andrew

TOOLS:

- Paint brush (1)

PARTS:

- Wood or Masonite Panel (1)
- Clear Polyurethane Varnish (1)
- Non-water based Glue (1)
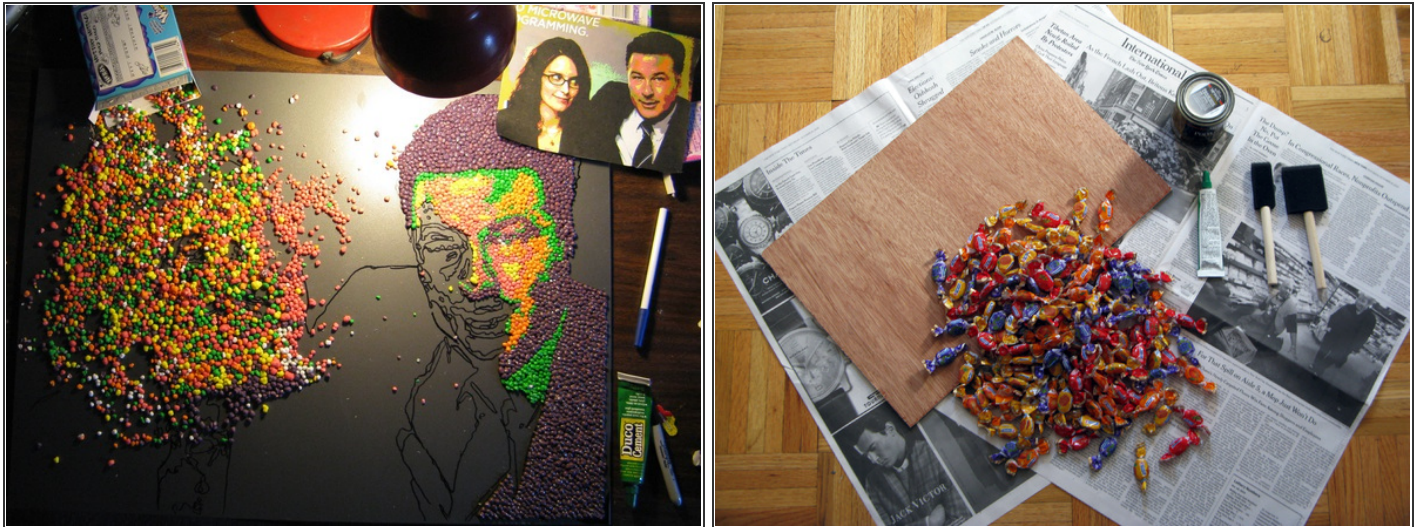- Left-over Halloween Candy (1)

SUMMARY

Let's say that you were overzealous with your Halloween candy purchases this year (or maybe trick-or-treater traffic was down in your neighborhood) and now you have a big bag or two of candy that you don't really want to eat. And then let's say that there is someone you've been meaning to make a sweet portrait of, like, for instance, Abraham Lincoln. Well, then; boy, do I have a project for you.

I was recently asked to make a portrait of Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin out of Nerds candies. In order to make the portrait I had to figure out how to adhere the candy pieces to a panel and protect them from moisture which would eventually make the candy deteriorate. Then I had a whole bag of Halloween candy that I didn't particularly want to eat, so I made a portrait

of Abraham Lincoln out of it for my apartment. Here is the process I used to adhere and preserve the candy so that you can make your own candy portrait with your left-over or unwanted Halloween candy.

Step 1 — How to Preserve a Candy Portrait

- Design a portrait to make out of your left-over Halloween candy (or find candies that are the right color and size to make the portrait). Softer candy containing more moisture will deteriorate more quickly than harder candy, so keep this in mind when you pick which candy you will use. Make sure that your design will fit properly onto your wood or Masonite panel.

- You may also want to make sure your panel is the right size and shape to fit into a frame. If you are going to frame your portrait, leave room around the edge of it to glue a frame to the panel when you are done.

Step 2

- Seal your wood or Masonite panel with polyurethane varnish or an oil-based enamel paint to ensure that moisture will not be able to penetrate the panel and contact the candy.

Step 3

- Draw your design onto the panel if you wish, then start gluing your candies to your panel with a non-water based glue.
- Note: Solvents in your glue may blur permanent-marker ink if they come into contact with each other.
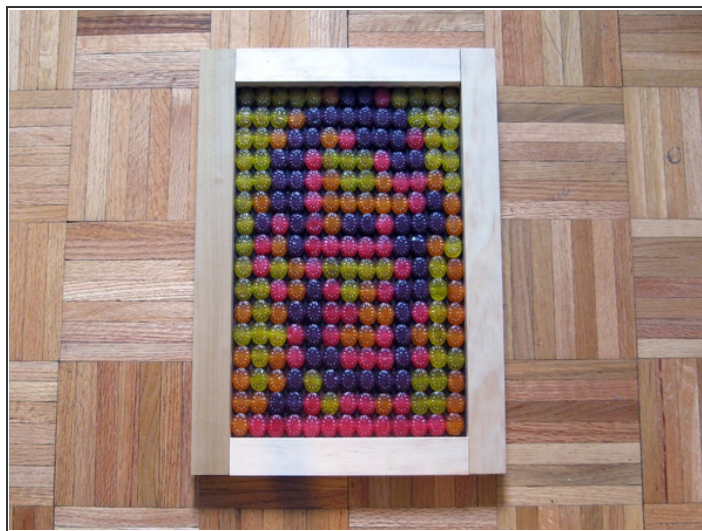
Step 4

- After you finish gluing your candy to the panel, coat the entire exposed surface of your candy portrait with clear polyurethane varnish. You may want to apply more than one coat to make sure that the varnish covers the surface completely; this will also help the candy stick to the panel.

- Contact with moisture will eventually cause candy to deteriorate so the purpose of this process is to insulate your candy from moisture as much as possible.

Step 5

- Frame your portrait or glue a frame around it to create a shadowbox and find a place to display it!

Andrew Salomone makes artwork about the absurd ways that ideas are communicated through popular culture. He is currently teaching a course on contemporary art and the internet at Parsons The New School for Design.

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